

PAY-BY-BAG IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**Effective
September 1, 2010**



PAY-BY-BAG IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Following is a plan developed by the Pay-By-Bag Implementation Committee to implement a Pay-By-Bag (“PbB”) program for the town of Hopkinton.

Implementation Date:

The committee has determined that the program will begin on September 1, 2010, assuring ample time to procure bags, communicate with all parties involved and address any other concerns that may arise. This also provides ample time to address any modifications that may need to occur at the transfer station.

Providing Information about PbB:

- General information, including frequently asked questions (FAQ’s) and the recycling brochure will be posted on the town’s website. The ordinance detailing PbB rules and regulations will also be posted on the town’s website.
- The FAQ’s document and a recycling brochure will be available at the Town Hall, the Hopkinton Library, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector’s Office and the Slusser Senior Center.
- Educational information will be disseminated through mailings and use of the media.

Warrant Article to Implement a PbB Program:

At the 2010 Hopkinton Town Meeting, voters approved the following warrant article:

“To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to establish and implement a mandatory ‘pay by bag’ program and further to adopt the provision of RSA 31:95-c for the purpose of accounting for the sale of designated solid waste bags (and/or coupons and other receipts) as budgeted annually, to be used to offset the cost of collection and disposal of residential solid waste and such other direct costs as budgeted annually. Such revenues and expenditures shall be accounted for in a special revenue fund to be known as the Pay by Bag fund, separate from the general fund. Any surplus in said fund shall not be deemed part of the general fund accumulated surplus and shall be expended only after a vote by the legislative body to appropriate a specific amount from said fund for a specific purpose related to the purpose of the fund or source of revenue. Any pay by bag program adopted by the town under the authority of this article shall contain a requirement that the initial cost for designated bags (and/or coupons or other receipts), any tipping fees for residential trash and any subsequent increases in the above, must be approved by majority of the legislative body before becoming effective. For 2010 only, the Board of Selectmen shall be authorized to set the above prices. The pay by bag price is not to exceed \$1.25 for the 33-gallon bags and \$0.75 for the 13-gallon bags for the year 2010.”

Details of PbB Program:

Residents who directly dispose of their household trash at the Hopkinton/Webster Transfer Station ("Transfer Station") will be required to purchase specially marked bags designed for refuse collection and disposal. These bags will be sold to residents through various retail outlets in the area. Bags will be sold at a price reflecting the cost of transportation and tipping fees the town pays for trash disposal, as well as the town's operating costs of the transfer station, excluding any bond costs. The income will be placed in a Special Revenue Fund known as the Pay-by-Bag Fund to offset Hopkinton's share of the transfer station operating costs.

The following guidelines shall apply to residential users of the system

1. Trash and recyclables will be accepted only during scheduled facility hours.
2. All regular household trash shall be in designated Hopkinton bags. No trash will be accepted if it is not in the designated bags. The following rules apply:
 - a. Any trash contained in unauthorized bags will not be allowed to be disposed of in the hopper at the transfer station.
 - b. Open bags: All bags are to be closed before they are brought to the transfer station.
 - c. Construction and demolition debris, metals, brush and bulk items such as appliances, computers, televisions, tires, mattresses, etc. will be handled according to rules and subject to fees established by the Boards of Selectmen.
 - d. Recyclables currently accepted without charge at the transfer station (paper, cardboard, aluminum and steel cans, glass bottles and plastics) should not be bagged in PbB bags.
3. All residents will be required to display, on the lower-left portion of their vehicle's windshield, a valid transfer station sticker that will be made available to town residents in a manner determined by the Board of Selectmen.

The following guidelines shall apply to private haulers who deposit trash at the transfer station.

Hopkinton household and commercial trash shall be brought to the transfer station in separate loads subject to the following rules:

Household Trash:

1. All haulers' loads shall be weighed before progressing to the tipping area.
2. A transfer station attendant shall supervise the tipping of the hauler's load.
3. If the attendant certifies that all trash has been collected in the designated bags, there will be no charge.
4. If on visual inspection by the attendant there is no significant loose trash and no significant trash in unauthorized bags, the load shall be designated as meeting the bag requirement and there shall be no tipping fee charges.
5. Recyclables (paper, cardboard, cans and bottles) delivered to the recycling center at the transfer station do not need to be bagged in PbB bags and can be recycled at no charge.
6. Violations of this ordinance by a hauler may lead to the hauler's being denied access to the transfer station.

Commercial Trash:

1. Those wishing to dispose of waste from commercial or industrial facilities within the Town shall be required to receive a permit to do so from the Board of Selectmen. Applications are available at the Town Hall.
2. All loads will be weighed before progressing to the tipping area.
3. The haulers shall be charged the cost of transportation and tipping fees in effect at the time of disposal.
4. Recyclables (paper, cardboard, cans and bottles) delivered to the recycling center at the transfer station do not need to be bagged in PbB bags and may be recycled at no charge.

PbB Bag Information

Plastic bags, both 13 gallon and 33 gallon, with the town name and seal are being purchased from WasteZero. The bag manufacturer will deliver bags to local stores for sale to residents. The retailers receive no mark-up on the bags and sell them for the benefit of their customers. The bags, sold in rolls of 5, will be available at the following retailers.

- Colonial Village, 54 Park Avenue, Contoocook
- The Cracker Barrel, 377 Main Street, Hopkinton
- Mr. Mike's, 891 Main Street, Contoocook
- Market Basket, Route 103, Warner
- Concord Cooperative Market, 24 South Main Street, Concord
- Hannaford's Supermarkets, 73 Fort Eddy Road, Concord
- Shaw's Supermarket, 20 Fort Eddy Road, Concord

The price of the bags will be \$1.25 per bag for the 33 gallon size and \$.75 per bag for the 13 gallon size. A supply of bags will be kept at the Human Services Department for distribution to residents as described below in the special populations section of this document. For the convenience of residents, bags will be made available at the Town Clerk's office from mid-August 2010 through September 30, 2010. All funds generated by these sales will be deposited into the "Pay by Bag" fund as referenced in the warrant article section above. These prices will be in effect from the onset of the program until the legislative body sets the bag price at Town Meeting 2011.

Additional Considerations

Financial Assistance

If purchasing bags would create a significant financial hardship, residents will be able to obtain them at either a reduced rate or free of charge from the town's Human Services Department. These residents will be accommodated based on the assistance eligibility formula used by the

Human Services Department. They would receive assistance for the average number of bags that would be used by a family of comparable size that recycles.

Law Enforcement

The Board of Selectmen will maintain contact with and seek advice from the police department regarding enforcement of ordinances prohibiting illegal dumping of trash. The experience of other communities that have implemented this program is that it normally negligible and short lived.

Litter Removal

Special bags will be made available at no cost to local service organizations and residents who volunteer their time to remove trash from roadsides. This program will be managed by the Hopkinton Board of Selectmen. Bags will be available from the Town Administrator. Unused bags shall be returned to the Town Hall.

Grace period

Recognizing the significant changes required by Hopkinton residents because of the adoption of the PbB program, the Board of Selectmen has determined that there will be a grace period during the adoption of this program. During this 14 day period, residents who do not comply and use designated bags for household trash will be reminded of the program implementation and their respective required compliance to all of its requirements. Private haulers are also subject to the grace period. At the conclusion of the grace period, the PbB will be strictly enforced.

Mutual Respect at the Transfer Station

Hopkinton residents and commercial haulers are reminded that Town employees are being instructed to administer the PbB program at the transfer station at the direction of the Town of Hopkinton. As such, they are due the respect of any other Town employee. Any significant abuse directed at these employees, during the performance of their duties, from residents of the Town of Hopkinton or Webster will be reported to the Chief of Police of the Town of Hopkinton. If a Hopkinton or Webster resident has a complaint regarding the implementation of the program or their treatment at the transfer station, they are encouraged to report that complaint to the Hopkinton Board of Selectman via the Hopkinton Town Administrator.



PAY-BY-BAG

Frequently Asked Questions...and Answers

Q: What is Pay-By-Bag?

A: Pay-By Bag (PbB) is a system by which you pay for the trash you discard. **There is no charge for recycling (current recycling rules and charges remain in force).** Individuals pay only for their own trash disposal, not that of others. Businesses pay the cost of their trash disposal as well. The fundamental principle involved is that people are responsible for their own trash disposal costs and that, since recycling is free, a PbB system creates a financial incentive to recycle.

Q: What are the benefits of implementing a PbB program?

A: The benefits are twofold: economic and environmental. Trash disposal costs are substantial. Recycling saves on trash disposal costs and generates revenue, thus saving tax dollars. Environmentally, less waste results in less toxic ash and less air pollution as by-products of incineration, the method by which we dispose of our trash. Additionally, recycling saves valuable resources and reduces energy consumption, thus resulting in the production of fewer greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change and threaten our environment.

Q: How does PbB provide a more equitable solution to trash disposal?

A: Currently, the cost of solid waste disposal is paid for by local property taxes. Residents can throw away as much as they like, and the entire cost must be covered by this tax. Under our current solid waste management program, residents who throw away less trash subsidize those who throw away greater amounts of trash. There is little incentive to conserve when others in town help subsidize wasteful practices. Under PbB, these costs are covered by a per-bag payment, and **there is no fee for recycling**, so PbB provides an economic incentive to residents to reduce their trash volume and recycle more. Experience in other towns shows that PbB increases recycling.

Q: Won't I be paying twice for trash collection -- once through taxes and again when I buy PbB bags?

A: Yes, but only from September 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010. During this transition period, residents will be paying taxes and buying designate bags. As of January 1, 2011, taxes for the operation of the transfer station will begin to be reduced by proceeds from the bag sales. Proceeds from bag sales will go to support only waste management and will not become part of the general fund. Any waste management expenses not covered by revenue from the bags will be covered by general taxation.

Q: Why shouldn't I get as many free services as possible from the Town?

A: Town services are never 'free'; you pay for them through your property tax. The idea that trash disposal is or ever was 'free' is an illusion resulting from the fact that disposal costs are incorporated in the tax bill. PbB is merely a shift in the way people pay for trash disposal. **It is not an added fee. Revenue from bag sales will go into a special account to offset the taxes currently paid for trash disposal.** One of the reasons that PbB works is that it makes it clear to everyone that trash disposal costs money.

Q: Since all taxpayers subsidize schools whether or not they have children in the schools, why shouldn't all taxpayers subsidize trash collection even if they aren't generating much trash?

A: Most taxpayers are willing to subsidize education because they feel that it's in the public interest. But generating more trash is not in the public interest -- quite the opposite. PbB strikes a balance between taxpayer subsidy and user per-bag payments.

Q: How much and how often can the fee be raised?

A: Bag fees will not exceed the cost for the collection, management and disposal of residential solid waste. We are currently paying those costs through our property taxes. PbB will simply change the manner in which those costs are distributed and assessed. The town's overall cost will decrease as trash volume decreased and recycling increases, resulting in a net savings to the taxpayers as a whole. In accordance with the approved warrant article, bag fees will be evaluated at Town Meeting.

Q: How do we know that PbB will reduce trash volume and increase recycling?

A: According to the EPA, the average waste reduction reported by PBB communities is between 25% and 45%.

Q: Will PbB result in problems with illegal dumping?

A: Experience has shown that any increase in illegal dumping is negligible and short-lived, if it occurs at all. Enforcement of littering laws will address illegal dumping.

Q: Do people in other communities like PbB?

A: In every community where PbB is proposed, there are residents who are certain they won't like the program. But once residents see the program in action, it receives strong support from a majority of people, largely because of its cost savings and inherent fairness. ***No community in New Hampshire has ever voted to rescind PbB.***

Q: How do we know that PbB won't be overly complicated or inconvenient?

A: A PbB program will be easy to understand and use. Specially marked PbB trash bags will be available at various stores, including Colonial Villager, Cracker Barrel, Mr. Mike's, Concord Cooperative Market, Shaw's, and Hannaford's on Fort Eddy Road in Concord and Market Basket in Warner. During the first month of the program, bags will also be available at the Town Clerk's office. After the program begins on September 1, 2010, only trash in PBB bags will be accepted. Again, **there will be no change in the way recyclables are treated.** They will not need to be put in PbB bags. They are recycled at no cost. Additionally, certain bulky items that would be difficult and costly to put in PbB bags and that are only occasionally disposed of (such

as Styrofoam packing that comes with large electronic items) will be taken at no charge. Common sense and reasonableness will assure that the program is implemented fairly.

Q: Will PbB benefit senior citizens?

A: Since senior citizens tend to have very modest trash output, they are currently subsidizing other households. Many senior citizens will see their trash disposal expenses go down with PbB, since they will come closer to paying only for the limited services they require.

Q: Won't PbB impose an unfair burden on low-income residents?

A: No. Low-income residents will also share in the overall savings achieved by PBB, and because PbB restores some measure of individual control over the trash bill, households that need to economize are given the option to do so. On balance, PbB is advantageous to low-income households. Additionally, subsidies will be made available through the Human Services Department. Low-income families who qualify for assistance will be provided with a certain number of bags at no charge or for a reduced fee. Generally, this number would be based on the average number used by a family of the same size that recycles.

Q: Will PbB be unfair to large families?

A: Opportunities to reduce waste are available to all households (recycling, composting, etc.), and those who limit their waste can get control over a bill they previously could not reduce. Although there is some relationship between family size and amount disposed, all households have opportunities to reduce. In most communities, large households do not generally receive discounts on water service, groceries, or other services that might also vary by family size. Trash output is correlated more with rising income and lifestyle choices than family size. The amount of unavoidable trash generated by larger families is not great enough to impose a hardship. In fact, if a family is careful with its trash, even large families can realize a net savings under PbB.

Q: What about people who currently use barrels instead of bags?

A: All trash must be in a PbB bag. You may place the filled PbB bag in a barrel to protect it from wildlife while waiting for pickup.

Q: What about really big items like refrigerators, TVs and furniture?

A: Bulky items will continue to be dealt with as they are now. TV sets and computer monitors are currently recycled. Items such as refrigerators, freezers, furniture, carpet, and tires will be handled under the stipulations of the current policy, as will building materials and hazardous waste.

Q: Will PbB cause residents to use more plastic bags in setting out trash? If so, isn't this an environmental problem?

A: Under PbB, some residents will use more bags, but many will use fewer. This occurs because, under PbB, residents tend to put more trash in each bag, and as recycling increases, trash bag use decreases. We are not yet sure how PbB will affect the total number of bags used. Since a typical trash bag weighs about 1 ounce, this is relatively insignificant compared to the significant tonnage reduction expected from PbB.

Q: How sturdy are the bags?

A: The bags are 1.5 millimeters thick which is almost twice the thickness of a regular kitchen garbage bag, and heavier than most 33-gallon bags found in grocery stores. The bag manufacturer makes bags for many of the PbB programs across the country, which would not be the case if there were quality problems with the bags. The 13-gallon bag is rated for 20 pounds and the 33-gallon bag is rated for 35 pounds.

Q: What do I need to know about sorting my recyclables?

A: Recyclables must be sorted as follows: Plastics – separate by the number on the bottom of the bottle; separate into three categories: #1s, #2s, and # 3-7s. Cans – separate aluminum cans from steel cans. Paper – all clean paper (office paper, newspaper, catalogs, magazines, mail, phone books, cereal and other cardboard food and non-food boxes, paper towel rolls, etc.) can be recycled together. If it tears, it can be recycled. Corrugated cardboard (such as cartons and packing boxes are made of) – separate from other materials. ***Paper and cardboard should be kept dry if left on the curb for a hauler.*** A covered plastic bin for paper and cardboard or a plastic cover will accomplish this. Glass – separate from other materials, but there is no need to separate by color. See the recycling brochure for more detailed information.

Q: Does my hauler recycle?

A: We have been made aware that some hauler plan to recycle and some do not. We are also aware that some haulers that are recycling are not recycling all the items that can be recycled. Please call your hauler to receive information on what they actually will be recycling.

Q: Where can I get more information about the PbB program?

A: Contact any member of the PbB Implementation Committee, or the Town Hall for additional information.